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Agency Secretary,
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State of California
California Environmental Protection Agency

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Air Resources Board | Department of Pesticide Regulation | Department of Toxic Substances Control

Integrated Waste Management Board | Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment | State Water Resources Control Board | Regional Water Quality Control Board

March 28, 2003

TO: Border and Tribal Communities in Imperial County, San Diego County
And the Southernmost Section of Riverside County

**REQUEST FOR INPUT ON POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL INFRASTRUCTURE
PROJECTS ALONG CALIFORNIA-BAJA CALIFORNIA BORDER**

Dear Interested Party:

In an effort to strategically position California for maximum funding from the North American Development Bank (NADB) and the Border Environmental Cooperation Commission (BECC), I would like to solicit your input in the development of an Environmental Infrastructure Needs Assessment Report for the California-Baja California border.

As part of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the NADB was created to fund environmental infrastructure projects within 62 miles (100 km) of the US-Mexico border region. The BECC was established to certify and recommend projects to the NADB for funding.

Shortly after the passage of NAFTA, the Governors of the States of California, Baja California and Baja California Sur formed an alliance and passed a joint resolution creating the California Environmental Cooperation Committee (Cal/BECC). The purpose of the Cal/BECC is to promote border environmental infrastructure projects on both sides of the border and to seek government and private sector funding for these projects. More specifically, the Cal/BECC works to help border and tribal communities achieve certification from the BECC and secure financial support from the NADB.

This year the Cal/BECC is embarking in the development of the third edition of the California-Baja California Environmental Infrastructure Needs Assessment Report. By providing an updated version of this report, California and Baja California will highlight their environmental infrastructure needs and identify projects that can qualify for construction and technical assistance grants and loans from the BECC and the NADB.

I encourage you to participate in this worthwhile effort by completing the attached questionnaire and providing any other pertinent information by May 30, 2003 to:

Ms. Claudia Villacorta
Cal/BECC Coordinator
California Environmental Protection Agency
Border Affairs Unit
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Sacramento, California 95814



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To date, the California-Baja California border region has received over \$100 million in grants and/or loans for environmental infrastructure projects. To continue this success, your participation is extremely important. Input by you towards this report will be an opportunity to identify, plan and fund environmental infrastructure projects. As soon as we have completed our first draft of the report, we will share it with you for comments. Projects included in the final report will be presented to federal and binational funding agencies for potential financial or technical assistance.

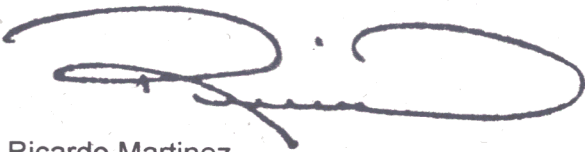
For your information, we have enclosed printed materials regarding the BECC, the NADB and the Cal/BECC. Additionally, the BECC Project Certification Criteria may be obtained by visiting the BECC website at www.cocof.org or by contacting the Cal/BECC Coordinator. As you may be aware, in the fall of 2000, the BECC and the NADB Board of Directors expanded their scope of activities to include other types of environmental projects. The BECC/NADB will consider new sectors, but will maintain projects in **water supply, wastewater treatment, municipal solid waste** and related matters as a priority. The new sectors include, but are not limited to, **air quality improvement, industrial and hazardous waste, public transportation, clean and efficient energy, municipal planning and development, and water management.**

I would like to highlight that grant assistance is available from the BECC and the NADB to fund studies necessary for the development of environmental infrastructure projects (e.g., engineering and feasibility studies, geological and hydrological studies, environmental assessments, planning documents, etc).

Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation. We look forward to receiving your input and to working with border and tribal communities in a united front to bring BECC and NADB monies as well as private sector funds to the California-Baja California Border.

Should you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact Ms. Villacorta, Cal/BECC Coordinator, at (916) 341-5735 or via email at cvillaco@calepa.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Ricardo Martinez
Assistant Secretary for Border Affairs

Enclosures